

from field commanders and service chiefs alike, is the need for an immediate supplemental. They have been forced to borrow against training money to keep operations going, and that bill has come due. As a result, training is slowing to a crawl or stopping. Some ammunition supplies are exhausted. Our military is not being kept up to standard.

That is what I hear. It is not just one service; it is all of them. That, Mr. Speaker, is why we need an immediate supplemental.

By immediate supplemental, I do not mean the check in the hand by the close of business Friday, although that would not hurt. But I do mean an immediate and public commitment that there will be a supplemental, a commitment that help is on the way. If the chiefs know a supplemental is coming, even one late in the fiscal year, they can resume full activity confident that their coffers will be replenished. Absent that assurance, though, the only prudent and, in many cases, the only legal thing for them to do is to stop training.

This is a test of the new administration, Mr. Speaker, a test of their word and of their world view. If the military is to be sacrificed on the altar of a tax cut, if help is not truly on the way, then skip the supplemental. But if the Nation's commitment to our men and women in uniform is real, then they should step up and pay what is owed.

CONSOLIDATED HEALTH CENTERS BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my voice to those calling for a substantial increase in the fiscal year 2002 budget appropriation for the consolidated health centers program.

Community health centers provide critical primary and preventive health care services to over 11 million low-income and uninsured patients in more than 3,000 rural and urban communities throughout our country. In my own district, thousands of citizens benefit greatly from the quality health care they receive at our local community health care clinics.

The fact that this program has enjoyed strong bipartisan support throughout its 30 years' existence is itself a testament to the success they have achieved in providing needed health care services to our Nation's most vulnerable populations.

While I am encouraged by the President's call to double the level of service these health centers provide, I believe his proposed funding increase of \$124 million will not adequately cover the critical demand for quality health care by the uninsured.

There are over 45 million people in our country without access to affordable health care insurance; and, sadly, that number continues to rise.

Nowhere is the problem of access to quality health care more critical than within the African American community where economic factors and limited health care options exacerbate an already disproportionate health care crisis.

Community health care centers are a vital component in addressing the health care gap that exists in minority communities across this country. But if they are to continue to meet the growing health care needs of those communities, it is imperative that we increase the consolidated health centers program funding by \$250 million in fiscal year 2002.

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Mr. Speaker, with an additional \$250 million, we can expand community health care facilities in rural and urban communities and provide quality health care to an additional 70,000 uninsured individuals. I urge the Committee on Appropriations and all of my House colleagues to support a \$250 million increase in funding for the consolidated health care program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRENSHAW). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KILPATRICK addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

H.R. 1249, PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS COPING WITH CROP DISEASES AND VIRUSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced H.R. 1249, to ensure that farmers who suffer crop losses due to plant viruses and plant diseases are eligible for crop insurance and noninsured crop assistance programs and that agricultural producers who suffer such losses are eligible for emergency loans.

Pandemics of plant viruses and diseases regularly destroy the crops of entire farms and often the crops of entire geographic areas. A single plant virus or disease outbreak can send farms into bankruptcy; often, farmers are left without any means of recovering. Agriculture producers can qualify for emergency loans when adverse weather conditions and other natural phenomena damage cause farm property damage or production losses, but, under current law, crop viruses and diseases are not considered "natural disasters" and thus are not eligible for these types of loans.

For example, in Hawaii in 1999, the State ordered the eradication of all banana plants on

the entire island of Kauai and in a 10 square-mile area of the island of Hawaii in an effort to eradicate the banana "bunchy top" virus. A court order required compliance, and farmers were ordered to destroy their entire farms and livelihood without any compensation. These farmers did not qualify for emergency loans or disaster assistance, and many were left with no other option but to sell their farms.

Today, Hawaii's papaya industry is faced with another outbreak of the ringspot virus. The only way to get rid of this virus is to destroy diseased plants, but farmers are reluctant to do so because of the financial loss involved. As a result, the disease spreads, with disastrous consequences to neighboring farmers and the rural economy.

The survival of our nation's farmers is largely dependent upon the unpredictable whims of mother nature. We provide our farmers with assistance when adversely affected by severe weather, but that is not enough. Emergency loans and disaster assistance must be made available to farmers for crops suffering from calamitous plant viruses and diseases.

H.R. 1249 would enable farmers to qualify for crop insurance programs, noninsured assistance programs, and low-interest emergency loans when devastated by crop losses due to plant viruses and diseases.

I invite my colleagues to cosponsor this worthy legislation, and I urge immediate consideration of H.R. 1249 in the House.

BUDGET PASSED TODAY SUP- PORTS OUR SOLDIERS AROUND THE WORLD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it sometimes takes a tragedy such as the loss of our pilots in Europe this week, or the recent deaths of the National Guard members killed in Georgia to remind us of the risks associated with military service in our country. In time of war, we realize the individual sacrifices made for the common good. But we should also recognize the efforts made every day by our soldiers around the world.

I believe the budget for our military forces which was passed by the House today is focused on our soldiers. The legislation would increase military pay by 4.6 percent and increases pay and other compensation by \$1.4 billion in fiscal year 2002.

It provides \$3.9 billion for the first year of an expanded health care package for over-65 military retirees. It also allows for an additional \$400 million to improve the quality of housing for military personnel and their families by providing new construction, renovation of existing housing, and measures to reduce out-of-pocket housing expenses.

The budget also provides funds for research and development to help guarantee that U.S. forces will go into the field with the tools they need to ensure victory and minimize casualties. At